Inside This Report

Catawba County Soil & Water Conservation District

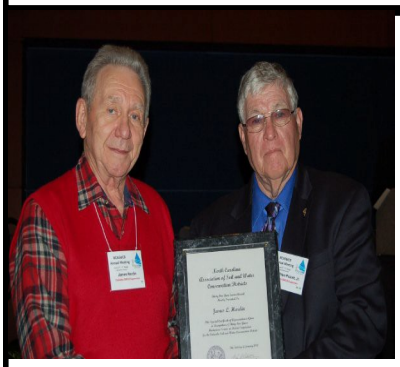
Annual Report 2009

This report is a condensed summary of the Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District's activities for fiscal year 2008 which covers the period from July l, 2008, through June 30, 2009.

The Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is a governmental subdivision of the State of North Carolina and is governed by a five-member Board, three of whom are elected and two appointed. North Carolina law charges them with the responsibility of planning and carrying out conservation activities that will best conserve the natural resources of Catawba County. They meet monthly, at 10:00 AM the first Friday Morning of each month on the third floor of the Agricultural Resources Center in the District/Natural Resources Conservation Service office in Newton. All meetings are open to the public.

Board Members of the Catawba SWCD: L to R Gene Wilson, James Hardin, Glenn Fulbright, Joe Devine. Kelly Hoke

, Catawba SWCD Staff:
Larry Williams SWCD
Randy Willis SWCD
Kate Peragine SWCD
Rick Grant NRCS



Supervisor James Hardin receiving recognition for serving 35 years on the Catawba SWCD Board from William Pickett President of the NCASWCD at the annual meeting held in Raleigh

Drought Response Program

In the Fall of 2007 funds became available to the Catawba SWCD to assist agriculture with drought assistance. The record drought of 2007 devastated county pastureland causing many to have to buy hay from outside the State or sell to reduce their herds. The Division of Soil and Water released funds to assist farmers in reestablishing their damaged pastureland.

An additional six million dollars of funding was provided through the Tobacco Trust Fund to renovate pastureland, install wells and improve irrigation throughout the State. Catawba SWCD had received $144,977.00 as of 0ctober 2008 from this funding.

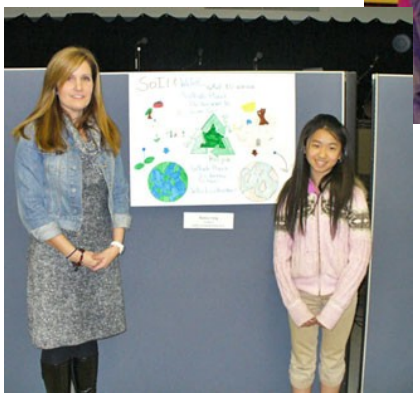
Catawba District was the first county in the State to install a practice and receive funds from the Drought Program.

Pastureland Damage due to the 2007 Drought

Catawba Soil and Water Conservation Contest Winners for 2009

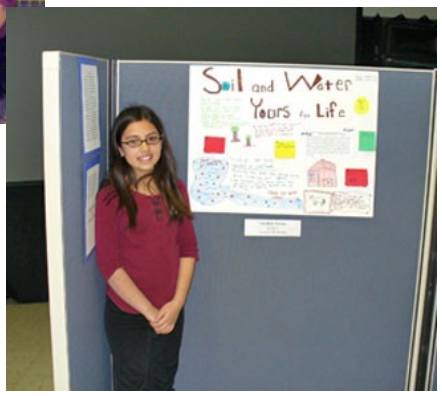
The Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District Speech, Poster and Essay contest was held in February, at the First United Methodist Church in Newton.

All The Winners!



1st Place 6th Grade Poster

Soil and Water...
Yours for Life



1st Place 5th Grade Poster

2009 NRCS Annual Report Catawba County, North Carolina
District Conservationist Richard Grant

I proudly present this 2008 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) annual report to you. We continue to make significant strides towards protecting our state's natural resources. Passage of the 2002 Farm Bill greatly increased funding for conservation programs like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Farmland Protection Program (FPP), the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP).

NRCS employees work in every county of the state. We are committed to helping our clients achieve their resource goals through a voluntary, incentive-based approach to land stewardship. This is the foundation of our conservation programs and eac year's gains take us closer to our objective of maintaining a productive land in harmony with a quality environment See Pg 4.

CATAWBA SWCD COST-SHARE PROGRAMS

Cattle causing stream bank erosion and loss of water quality

Non-point source pollution has been identified by the NC Division of Water Quality as the primary source of degradation of freshwater rivers and streams in North Carolina. According to the North Carolina Non-point Source Assessment Report, agriculture is the largest source of stream-use impacts in the state. Of the 30% of stream miles, which are impacted negatively, agriculture is suspected of impacting approximately 65%. In addition, agriculture is suspected of being the primary source (60% of impacted acres) of NPS pollution in estuarine areas.

The approach taken in North Carolina for addressing agriculture's contribution to the non-point source water pollution problem is to primarily encourage voluntary participation by the agricultural community. This approach is supported by financial incentives, technical and educational assistance, research, and regulatory programs.

This program is intended to reduce the input of sediments, nutrients, animal wastes and pesticide **(agricultural non-point source pollution**) into the watercourses of our state. Since October, l989, $1,405,461.00 has been allocated to Catawba County through the NCACSP

By helping agricultural producers improve their level of on-farm management through the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs). These include vegetative, structural or management systems that are used to improve the efficiency of farming operations by reducing potential pollutants into surface water. Popular BMPs offered include strip cropping, animal waste management systems, poultry composters, stream crossings, spring developments, and cropland conversion. An agricultural producer participating in this program will be reimbursed by the State for 75% of the average cost of each BMP installed. The remaining 25% of the cost is the responsibility of the producer.

Stream bank restoration with fencing and buffers

On May 5 2008 Supervisors Gene Wilson , James Hardin, Tom Bollinger and the staff of the District conducted spot-checks of four farms for compliance. The practices included cropland conversion, wells water tanks, Rock Waterway and a stock trail. All were found in compliance with the guide lines of the program.

A summary of results of the Program Year 2009

- $ 51,699.00 Ag Cost Share
- $90,545.00 Drought Funds
- $9,278.00 CCAP Funds
- 41 Contracts Total
- 1 Stock Trail
- 8 Watering tanks
- 142 acres Affected
- 2330 ft of fence
- 375 ac Pastureland Renovation
- 6 Heavy Use Area's
- 1 Cisterns
- 1 Stream crossings
- 12 Wells

Watering Tank for Livestock

The planned BMP's save 8,978.83 tons per year of soil, and exclude more than 7,900 cattle and over 500 goats from free roam of the streams. More than 800,000 chickens were accounted for in poultry waste management practices.

Rock lined Waterway

2009 NRCS Annual Report

Catawba County, North Carolina

Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA)

In FY-2007, the conservation partnership in Catawba County assisted over 400 land users, consultants, and units of government with solving natural resource problems.

PRS 6.13 Performance Summary - County Measures	Fiscal Year Goal	Total Progress	Progress Percent
C01 - CNMP Applied (No.)	3	3	100
C02 - CNMP Written (No.)	3	4	133
C03 - Conservation Plans for Cropland Written (Ac.)	300	1,548	516
C04 - Conservation Plans for Grazing Land Written (Ac.)	450	1,102	245
C05 - Grazing land with Conservation Applied to Protect the Resource Base (Ac.)	300	297	99
C08 - Non-federal Land Treated for Fish and Wildlife Habitat (Ac.)	50	23	47
C09 - Reduction in the Acreage of Cropland Soils Damaged by Erosion (Ac.)	250	335	134
C10 - Soil Erosion Reduced (Tons)	870	4,107	472

PRS 2.22 Summary Conservation Practices	Planned	Applied
Access Road (560) (ft)	3,618	1,464
Agrichemical Mixing Facility (702) (no)	1	
Animal Mortality Facility (316) (no)	2	
Composting Facility (317) (no)	1	1
Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (100) (no)	5	3
Conservation Cover (327) (ac)	475	261
Conservation Crop Rotation (328) (ac)	728	402
Cover Crop (340) (ac)	10	
Critical Area Planting (342) (ac)	1	1
Early Successional Habitat Development/Management (647) (ac)	258	49
Fence (382) (ft)	38,149	
Field Border (386) (ft)	3,900	
Firebreak (394) (ft)	29,253	
Forage Harvest Management (511) (ac)	94	98
Forest Stand Improvement (666) (ac)	140	50
Grade Stabilization Structure (410) (no)	3	
Heavy Use Area Protection (561) (ac)	21	3
Incinerator (769) (no)		1
Lined Waterway or Outlet (468) (ft)	40	
Long Term No. Till (778) (ac)	14	
Nutrient Management (590) (ac)	1,845	174
Pasture and Hay Planting (512) (ac)	169	156
Pest Management (595) (ac)	1,756	174
Pipeline (516) (ft)	16,808	1,050
Prescribed Burning (338) (ac)	61	
Prescribed Grazing (528) (ac)	680	203
Prescribed Grazing (528A) (ac)	401	51
Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till/Strip Till/Direct Seed (329) (ac)	13	13
Residue Management, No-Till/Strip Till (329A) (ac)	94	125
Residue Management, Seasonal (344) (ac)	677	264
Riparian Forest Buffer (391) (ac)	8	
Roof Runoff Structure (558) (no)	6	2
Structure for Water Control (587) (no)	1	1
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612) (ac)	38	22
Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (490) (ac)	16	
Underground Outlet (620) (ft)	406	100
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645) (ac)	148	13
Use Exclusion (472) (ac)		2
Waste Storage Facility (313) (no)	5	2
Waste Utilization (633) (ac)	22	14
Water Well (642) (no)	2	1
Watering Facility (614) (no)	26	3
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644) (ac)	20	10

CRP **program planting of wildlife mix on Cropland**

Continuous CRP **buffer beside creek is planted in trees with fencing to protect**

CP33 UPLAND BIRD HABITAT BUFFER
program planting of wildlife mix on Cropland

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary conservation program that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible National goals. Through EQIP, farmers and ranchers may receive financial and technical help to install or implement structural and management conservation practices on eligible agricultural land. Through five to 10 year contracts, USDA may cost share up from 50 to 90 percent of the costs of certain conservation practices, depending upon eligibility.

North Carolina received $ 14.2 million in EQIP funds for 2007. In Catawba County there were six applications for cost share assistance on practices ranging from dead poultry incinerators, poultry litter storage facilities, wells, water tanks, access roads, All eligible applications are scored and ranked after conservation plans and estimated cost share amounts was calculated. Five applications were selected for funding, allocating $256,160 in cost share funds to active farms in Catawba County.

	EQIP Sign Ups	Applications Received	Applications Funded	Dollars Cost Shared
1	1997	18	7	$21,446
2	1998	133	30	$64,589
3	1999	19	19	$82,743
4	2000	4	3	$45,871
5	2001	7	1	$1,458
6	2002-1	24	11	$23,048
7	2002-2	3	3	$54,770
8	2003	95	2	$102,206
9	2004	4	4	$98,731
10	2005	5	5	$112,073
11	2006	6	5	$256,160
	TOTALS	**318**	**90**	**$863,095**

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)

Since 1998, there have been four WHIP program contracts developed in Catawba County. In 2002, two of those were cancelled by the landowner. The two remaining contracts provide habitat and habitat improvement to 12 acres and received cost sharing of $18990.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

There are three Conservation Reserve Programs that land users can participate. Catawba County has had over the past 20 years about 4,005 acres enrolled in ***CRP*** and the ***Continuous CRP*** programs. About one half of the acres are planted to trees the other to grass. There are currently 58 contracts active, on 1312.9 acres, with annual payments totaling $53,511. Over the ten year life of these 58 contracts this amounts to $530,511. CRP removes highly erodible cropland from production and established either a vegetative cover or trees. The Continuous CRP program promotes the installation of buffers along streams in the watersheds by providing technical and cost-share assistance.

The CP33 UPLAND BIRD HABITAT BUFFER program began in 2005. This Conservation Reserve Program practice will benefit farmers, bobwhite quail, and other declining populations of grassland and brush land songbirds in North Carolina. This program pays farmers to establish habitat buffers around existing cropland. These strips (buffers) of volunteer vegetation on field edges that provide valuable structure, nesting and brood cover for bobwhite quail and other songbirds and other wildlife and food for birds in a farm landscape. These buffers also protect water quality and support integrated pest management.

Envirothon

The Area 2 Soil and Water Conservation Districts held the ninth annual Northwest Envirothon Competition in Wilkesboro. This environmental educational event sponsors middle and high school teams competing in environmental topics of Soils, Aquatics, Forestry, Wildlife, and Current Environmental Issues. Participation in last year's event was 110 teams with more than 700 students, advisors, resource people and volunteers participating in the 2009 event.

The North American Envirothon was held in August on the campus of Western Carolina University. Supervisor Kelly Hoke volunteered during this weeklong event that hosted teams from each of the United States and Canada.

Larry Williams teachs a Soil's class to the Area II Envirothon contestants.

Environmental Awareness Week

The Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District and the
Catawba Cooperative Extension Service host 2 Environmental Awareness Week Field Days for the Fifth graders in Catawba County each year. Field Days give students the opportunity to learn conservation practices first hand from experts in their fields.
The 2009 Field Days were held at Southside Park in Newton.
Workshops included Recycling, Air Quality, Bird Watching, Water Quality, and Soil Conservation.

Forestry

Beekeepers

Recycling

Community Conservation Assistance Program

Soil & Water Program Pays For Cisterns In Catawba County

The Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District has partnered with the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources to offer the citizens of Catawba County a new program. The program is entitled Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP), and it addresses nonpoint source pollution from private and public land.

Pressure from a rapidly expanding human population is the driving force behind water quality degradation in the Catawba River basin. The estimated population density is 356 persons/square mile, versus the average statewide population density of 163 persons/square mile, making this the most densely populated basin in the state.
The expanding population is accompanied by an increase in urban and built-up land cover that increases the rate and intensity of polluted storm water runoff.
Growing populations not only require more water, but they also lead to the discharge and runoff of greater quantities of waste and pollutants into the state's streams and groundwater. Thus, just as demand and use increases, some of the potential water supply is lost.

Storm water runoff is a primary carrier of nonpoint source pollution in both urbanized and rural areas. The impact of storm water runoff is particularly severe in developing areas where recently graded areas are highly susceptible to erosion and urbanized areas where storm water runoff is rapidly channeled through curb and gutter systems into nearby streams.

3000 Gal Cistern at Hickory Public Works

The Community Conservation Assistance Program is a voluntary program that targets urban, suburban and rural landowners to help them reduce their contribution to nonpoint source pollution. CCAP will not be used to aid new development, nor meet the requirements of existing regulations.

Practices that can be implemented through the CCAP are as follows: abandoned well closure, backyard rain garden, cisterns, critical area planting, diversions, grassed swales, pet waste receptacles, riparian buffer, stream restoration, stream bank and shoreline protection, bio-retention areas and storm water wetlands.

The Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District recently installed a 3000 gallon cistern at the City of Hickory Public Works Facility and a 1700 gallon under ground cistern at Hickory High School using funds from CCAP. Both cisterns will serve to slow storm water from entering nearby streams and thus improve water quality. The cisterns will also provide water for irrigation.

1700 Gal Cistern at Hickory High School

The Catawba Soil & Water Conservation District office is in the ARC building and can be reached at 465-8950. For more information on CCAP or rain barrels, go to Soil & Water's page under departments on the counties' main page.

Catawba County
Soil & Water Conservation District

PO Box 389
Newton, NC 28658

Mission Statement

The Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District's mission is to administer a comprehensive conservation program to protect and conserve our natural resources of Soil and Water by providing financial, educational and technical assistance to citizens of Catawba County and to establish new programs in concert with other appropriate agencies and organizations to meet changing needs.

National Association of Conservation Districts
conserving natural resources
for our future

NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service

http://www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC/index.html

http://www.catawbacountync.gov/depts/soilwater/

Phone (828) 465-8950 Fax (828) 465-8953

CATAWBA COUNTY 1842 SM

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